



News release

Insurance Council
of Australia

Wednesday, 3 January 2023

Catastrophe Declaration extended to include New Year storms

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) has today extended its Insurance Catastrophe declaration for the recent storms, rain and flooding to 3 January, highlighting the extensive impact of severe weather across the east coast from Christmas through to the New Year.

Almost 38,000 insurance claims have been lodged following the weather that has impacted Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria since 23 December.

The ICA's Catastrophe declaration – known as Cat 233 – serves to escalate and prioritise the insurance industry's response for affected policyholders.

Under the Catastrophe declaration:

- Claims from affected policyholders will be given priority by insurers.
- Claims will be triaged to direct urgent assistance to the worst-affected property owners.
- ICA representatives are mobilised to work with local agencies and services and affected policyholders as soon as emergency services say it is safe to do so.
- Insurers mobilise disaster response specialists to assist affected customers with claims and assessments as soon as emergency services say it is safe to do so.
- An industry taskforce is established to identify and address issues arising from this catastrophe.

Data from insurers shows that the Gold Coast has seen the highest concentration of claims.

A separate declaration (Cat 232) has been made for TC Jasper and flooding in far north Queensland.

Quote attributable to Andrew Hall, CEO, Insurance Council of Australia:

The volume and intensity of the storms that have impacted three states prior to Christmas has caused substantial damage.

These severe storms have caused significant stress and uncertainty to those impacted, and insurers are already assisting customers with claims and the recovery process.

Insurance assessors are being deployed to the most recently affected communities from today.

Those impacted should contact their insurer even if they don't know the full extent of the damage.

Damaged contents such as furnishings and carpet do not need to be retained, but keeping a record or sample will help with the claims process.

The ICA and insurers are working with government authorities to make sure insurance customers get access to information and assistance as soon as possible.